



January 25, 2000

Will Stelle
Regional Administrator, Pacific Northwest Region
National Marine Fisheries Service
7600 Sand Point Way, N.E. Building 1
Seattle, WA 98115

Dear Will:

As you know, we have raised concerns regarding the work of the Cumulative Risk Initiative (CRI) effort of the National Marine Fisheries Service. While we appreciate the effort of these scientists to develop a mechanism to analyze extinction risks and to evaluate potential population growth rates, a number of scientists in the region have raised concerns about the CRI approach and analyses. These concerns need to be addressed if the "federal family" and the region are to make the upcoming decisions on the alternatives outlined in the DEIS and "All H" paper based on credible science and the best available information.

We are particularly concerned about some aspects of the CRI analyses because of obvious and serious policy implications. For example, the selection of one fish in a single year as a quasi-extinction threshold for purposes of analysis has been questioned by many scientists because it appears to be too low and results in optimistic estimates of the likely time to extinction for Snake River spring-summer stocks. These optimistic estimates may lead reasonable people to assume that the region can delay making significant changes to protect the salmon while we conduct further studies. A more conservative and more credible quasi-extinction threshold could significantly alter the projected extinction timeframes and both the public and policymaker understanding of the extinction risks these species face.

We are submitting with this letter seven questions about the CRI analyses and approach that we believe go to the heart of scientific issues critical to the upcoming decision. The questions have been prepared by Dr. Gretchen Oosterhout of Decision Matrix after consulting with a number of other scientists in the region. We request that, in order to ensure that the federal family and the region are in a position to make decisions based on the best available science, the CRI promptly respond to these questions in writing and

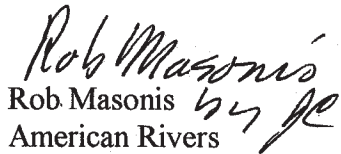
TROUT UNLIMITED: America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation Organization
Western Conservation Office: 213 S.W. Ash St., Suite 205, Portland, OR 97204
Phone: (503) 827-5700 Fax: (503) 827-5672 www.tu.org

reassess any previous conclusions or assumptions as are appropriate in response to these questions. Of course, any responses or changes to the CRI analyses should also be made widely available to the public, consistent with the CRI Team's commitment to transparency and accountability. We also request that these issues be addressed in the public workshops we have asked for in our letter of January 11, 2000, to which we have not yet received a response.

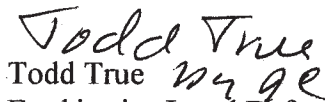
Sincerely,



Jeff Curtis
Trout Unlimited



Rob Masonis
American Rivers



Todd True
Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund

cc Dr. Peter Karieva
 George Frampton, CEQ
 Anne Badgely, USFWS
 Brigadier General Carl Strock, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Don Sampson, CRITFC
 Judi Johansen, BPA
 Northwest Power Planning Council Members
 Chip McConnaha, Northwest Power Planning Council
 Dr. David Marmorek
 Jim Lichatowich, Chair of the ISAB
 Daniel Goodman, ISAB
 Bill Shake, USFWS
 Danny Consenstein NMFS
 Rick Ilgenfritz, NMFS
 Roy Hemmingway, Oregon Governor's Office
 Curt Smitch, Washington Governor's Office
 Ed Bowles, Idaho Department of Fish and Game